

Whereas, in March 1999, the United States, along with other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), commenced military action aimed at ending Slobodan Milosevic's brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing against the people of Kosovo;

Whereas that military action resulted in the defeat of Serb forces and the creation of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, an interim United Nations administration that governs Kosovo, and which ended, de facto, the sovereignty that was previously exercised by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia over Kosovo;

Whereas the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States have served bravely in Kosovo since 1999, and their presence and participation in the NATO-led Kosovo Force has been indispensable in protecting the people of Kosovo and stabilizing the region;

Whereas United Nations administration was never intended nor understood as a permanent solution to the political status of Kosovo;

Whereas, in light of NATO's military intervention in Kosovo and the United Nations trusteeship established in Kosovo pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999), the international community has recognized the political circumstances in Kosovo as unique, and the settlement of Kosovo's status therefore does not establish a precedent for the resolution of other conflicts;

Whereas continuing uncertainty about the status of Kosovo is unacceptable to the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of Kosovo, inhibits economic and political development in Kosovo, and contributes to instability and radicalism in both Kosovo and Serbia;

Whereas, in 2005, the United Nations Secretary-General appointed the former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, as United Nations Special Envoy for Kosovo to develop a comprehensive settlement proposal to resolve the political status of Kosovo;

Whereas, in March 2007, after 14 months of intensive diplomacy, Special Envoy Ahtisaari submitted to the Security Council a comprehensive settlement proposal that would result in supervised independence for Kosovo, with robust protections for the rights of minorities; and

Whereas Special Envoy Ahtisaari has explored every reasonable avenue for compromise in the course of his diplomacy and has stated that further negotiations would be counterproductive: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the United States should support the independence of Kosovo in accordance with its currently constituted borders, a resolution that represents the only just, sustainable solution for an economically viable and politically stable Kosovo;

(2) the United States should, in consultation and cooperation with its allies, vigorously and promptly pursue a United Nations Security Council resolution that endorses the recommendations of United Nations Special Envoy for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari;

(3) in the absence of timely action by the United Nations Security Council, the United States should be prepared to act in conjunction with like-minded democracies to confer diplomatic recognition on, and establish full diplomatic relations with, Kosovo as an independent state, much as the United States worked in cooperation with like-minded democracies to protect the people of Kosovo in 1999;

(4) the United States should oppose any delay in the resolution of the political status of Kosovo as counterproductive, potentially

dangerous, and likely to make the achievement of a lasting settlement more difficult;

(5) the United States should work together with the European Union as a full partner in supporting the political and economic development of an independent Kosovo;

(6) the United States should support the integration of Kosovo into international and Euro-Atlantic institutions, including its timely admission to the Partnership for Peace program of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), with the ultimate goal of full membership in NATO;

(7) the United States should reaffirm its commitment to southeastern Europe, including the continuation of the military mission in Kosovo to deter and disrupt any efforts by any party to destabilize the region through violence;

(8) the Government of Kosovo should exercise responsible leadership under supervised independence and thereby accelerate the transition to full independence, taking particular care to reassure, protect, and ensure the full political and economic rights of Serb and other minority communities in Kosovo;

(9) the Government of Kosovo should make every reasonable effort to develop a cooperative relationship with the Government of Serbia, in recognition of its legitimate interests in the safety of the Serb population in Kosovo and in the protection and preservation of the patrimonial sites of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo; and

(10) the Government of Serbia should exercise responsible leadership and seize the opportunity and the imperative presented by the independence of Kosovo to end the dark chapter of the 1990s and focus its energies toward achieving a prosperous and peaceful future through regional cooperation and integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions, including NATO and the European Union, and toward the establishment of open, constructive relations with the government of Kosovo.

SENATE RESOLUTION 136—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE CONDEMNING THE SEIZURE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN OF 15 BRITISH NAVAL PERSONNEL IN IRAQI TERRITORIAL WATERS, AND CALLING FOR THEIR IMMEDIATE, SAFE, AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE

Mr. COLEMAN (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BROWNBACK, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DODD, Mrs. CLINTON, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. VOINOVICH, and Mr. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 136

Whereas, on March 23, 2007, a naval vessel of the United Kingdom, the HMS Cornwall, was conducting routine operations in Iraqi territorial waters pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1723 (2006) and in support of the Government of Iraq;

Whereas, on March 23, 2007, a boarding team consisting of 7 Royal Marines and 8 sailors embarked in 2 of the boats of the HMS Cornwall to conduct a routine boarding of an Indian flagged merchant vessel pursuant to the authorization of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1723 (2006);

Whereas, as Vice Admiral Charles Style, Deputy Chief of the British Defense Staff

(Commitments), demonstrated in a presentation on March 28, 2007, "the merchant vessel was 7.5 nautical miles south east of the Al Faw Peninsula, . . . 29 degrees 50.36 minutes North 048 degrees 43.08 minutes East. This places her 1.7 nautical miles inside Iraqi territorial waters. This fact has been confirmed by the Iraqi Foreign Ministry.";

Whereas at some point shortly after completion of the successful inspection of the merchant ship, the two United Kingdom vessels were surrounded and escorted by Iranian Islamic Republican Guard Navy vessels toward the Shatt 'Al Arab Waterway and into Iranian territorial waters;

Whereas, as Margaret Beckett, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, stated to the House of Commons on March 28, 2007, even the coordinates of the seizure event that were given by Iran's Ambassador to the United Kingdom at the Ambassador's first meeting with United Kingdom officials were themselves in Iraqi waters;

Whereas Foreign Secretary Beckett noted in that same statement that authorities of the Government of Iran provided "corrected" coordinates of the incident on March 25, 2007, claiming that the event took place in Iranian waters;

Whereas the merchant vessel that was boarded had remained anchored since the time it was boarded, and on March 25, 2007, its location was verified to be in Iraqi waters;

Whereas Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair stated on March 25, 2007, that "there is no doubt at all that these people were taken from a boat in Iraqi waters. It is simply not true that they went into Iranian territorial waters."; and

Whereas the Government of Iran has yet to release the 15 British sailors it has been holding captive since seizing the sailors from Iraqi waters on March 23, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns in the strongest possible terms the seizure by the Government of Iran of 15 British naval personnel from Iraqi territorial waters as a provocative and illegal act; and

(2) calls for the immediate, safe, and unconditional release of the personnel from captivity.

SENATE RESOLUTION 137—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK ON THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE ACT THAT AUTHORIZED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HOT SPRINGS RESERVATION

Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself and Mr. PRYOR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

S. RES. 137

Whereas, with the establishment of the Hot Springs Reservation, the concept in the United States of setting aside a nationally significant place for the future enjoyment of the citizens of the United States was first carried out 175 years ago in Hot Springs, Arkansas;

Whereas the Hot Springs Reservation protected 47 hot springs in the area of Hot Springs, Arkansas;

Whereas, in the first section of the Act of April 20, 1832 (4 Stat. 505, chapter 70), Congress required that "the hot springs in said territory, together with four sections of land, including said springs, as near the centre thereof as may be, shall be reserved for